

- 1 -

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 05/16/2010

Ambassador Hector Timerman, Argentine Ambassador to the United States, Embassy of the Argentine Republic, 1600 New Hampshire Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C., telephone number (202) 238-6412, was advised of the identities of the interviewing agents and the purpose for this interview. [redacted]

[redacted] was present for the duration of this interview. This interview took place at the Argentine Embassy. Ambassador Timerman provided the following information:

Ambassador Timerman requested this meeting based on interactions Congressman Eric Massa had with Ambassador Timerman and the Argentine Embassy. Ambassador Timerman contacted the Department of Justice after reading a newspaper article about suspect financial transactions involving the election campaign of Congressman Massa.

On or about 01/20/2009, Ambassador Timerman sent a congratulatory letter to Congressman Massa on Massa's recent election to Congress. It is customary for the Argentine Embassy to send these letters out to Members of Congress upon the Member's election. On or about 01/26/2009, Congressman Massa sent a letter to Ambassador Timerman offering to work on issues of importance to Argentina.

In February 2009, Congressman Massa called Ambassador Timerman seeking to schedule a meeting with the Ambassador. On or about 02/13/2009, Ambassador Timerman met with Congressman Massa at the Congressman's Capitol Hill office. Present for this meeting were [redacted] the Office of Congressman Massa. During the meeting, Congressman Massa indicated that he had developed an affection for Argentina that stemmed from his childhood. Congressman Massa's father was posted in Argentina as a naval attache and as a result, Massa lived in Argentina for a number of years. Congressman Massa also indicated he did a tour with the Argentine Navy during his naval career as part of a military exchange program. Ambassador Timerman told Congressman Massa that he would be grateful for any congressional assistance Congressman Massa could provide in matters that were important to Argentina. At one point, Congressman Massa indicated he could help

Investigation on 05/11/2010 at Washington, D.C.

File # 56C-WF-241999 27 Date dictated _____

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Continuation of FD-302 of Hector Timerman, On 05/11/2010, Page 2

open up the lemon market to Argentine products, which would create jobs in Argentina.

During the meeting, Congressman Massa discussed that one of the toughest tasks for him as a new Member of Congress was to raise money for his reelection. Congressman Massa solicited Ambassador Timerman's assistance to help him raise campaign funds from Argentine sources. The Ambassador knew that this was an inappropriate and illegal request. Ambassador Timerman told Congressman Massa that he would not be able to assist him in raising campaign funds.

Ambassador Timerman invited Congressman Massa to his residence for a wine tasting event later that month. At this event, Congressman Massa was interviewed by an Argentine journalist for a article about Massa's interest in promoting Argentine interests in Congress.

In mid-April 2009, Congressman Massa contacted the Argentine Embassy to schedule a second meeting with Ambassador Timerman. On or about 04/23/2009, Congressman Massa and Ambassador Timerman met again at Congressman Massa's Capitol Hill office. [redacted] were present for the meeting. Congressman Massa scheduled requested meeting because he wanted to discuss an Argentine debt issue with the Ambassador.

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The debt issue that Congressman Massa raised with Ambassador Timerman related to vulture funds held by Americans that resulted from Argentina's financial default in 2001. Congressman Massa told Ambassador Timerman that "everybody was calling him [Congressman Massa] regarding the debt issue." Congressman Massa told Ambassador Timerman that this issue, if unresolved, could ultimately damage Argentine - U.S. relations. Congressman Massa suggested he, the Congressman, could broker a resolution between the Government of Argentina and a group of American creditors represented by the American Task Force Argentina (ATFA). Congressman Massa indicated to the Ambassador that if the bond holders were paid, the American lemon market could be opened to Argentina.

According to Ambassador Timerman, ATFA represents the U.S. creditors holding Argentine vulture bonds. Ambassador Timerman stated that ATFA is primarily funded by Elliot Management. Elliot Management specializes in buying distressed bonds and then using political contacts to influence the process so that the bonds

56C-WF-241999

Continuation of FD-302 of Hector Timerman, On 05/11/2010, Page 3

are paid in full. [REDACTED]
Elliot Management is one of the largest American creditors.

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Ambassador Timerman was already engaged with the debt holders to find a solution and he did not believe Congressman Massa's involvement was necessary. At some point, Congressman Massa indicated that his, the Congressman's, political life depended on the debt issues being resolved. Ambassador Timerman disagreed with the Congressman's characterization of the matter and refused to involve Congressman Massa as a broker between the American creditors and the Government of Argentina. Ambassador Timerman believed Congressman Massa was creating a situation that the Congressman could benefit from.

Ambassador Timerman advised that [REDACTED] had a prior relationship with [REDACTED] currently with the [REDACTED] a lobbying firm representing ATFA. [REDACTED] worked for [REDACTED] when they were both assigned to [REDACTED]

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On or about 05/12/2009, Congressman Massa raised the vulture fund issue with a visiting delegation of Argentine legislators.

On or about 05/19/2010, Congressman Massa introduced a bill in Congress asking for a financial embargo of Argentina because of the debt issue. Ambassador Timerman stated that the bill was publicized in the media in an attempt to put pressure on Argentina to pay the debt.